ORNAMENTAL WOODS FOR BUILDING PURPOSES.

SIR,—In consequence of the repeal of the duties on every description of wood used in cabinet making, some of a very valuable quality to the builder are now, from the reduction in price, placed within his reach, and will, I have no doubt, when they are better known, entirely supersede others of inferior quality, hitherto in use. For example, that most beautiful of all woods, *mahogany*, is now lower in price than *wainscot*.

If it will suit the design of your publication, I shall be happy to send you a few lines occasionally on the subject of the woods best adapted for the purposes of building, but which, from the previous high price, have been excluded.

To begin with *pencil cedar*: this wood is the growth of America, and comes over in logs of ten to twenty feet long, and eight to twenty inches square. As its name denotes, it has been principally used in this country for making pencils, but it is an extremely useful wood for many purposes. Owing to its strong scent, it has the property of keeping off all kinds of insects and vermin, and is, therefore, well adapted for skirting boards to bed-rooms, the linings of cupboards, seats of water-closets, floors of barns and warehouses used for storing grain. All shops where fur, blankets, or woollen goods are kept should be entirely fitted up with it, especially tailors' shops. For out-door purposes it is also very useful; nearly all the railway sleepers in America are made of this wood, as it never rots, and it hardens by exposure to wet. It is now being introduced into some of the railways in the north of England for the same purpose; it is also extensively used in America for ship building, having the property, when used with other wood, of preventing its rotting.

There is no limit to the quantity that can be obtained of this wood if required. Its present selling price averages about 5d. the superficial foot.—I am, Sir, &c., J. E.

Railway-place.

CONSTRUCTION OF SEWERS.

DONALDSON AND OTHERS *v.* BIRD AND ANOTHER.

The Attorney-general, Mr. Butt, and Mr. Peacock appeared for the plaintiffs; and the Solicitor-general and Mr. Bovill for the defendants. In the Queen's Bench, before Mr. Justice Williams.

This was an action brought by the Commissioners of Sewers for Westminster and Middlesex, against the defendant, under his guarantee for the due performance of a contract entered into by his son. It was stated that in 1839, in answer to an advertisement, Mr. Bird was accepted as the builder of "the Ranelagh main sewer, Gloucester-road, Paddington," and a section of the arch required was given to him by Mr. Dowley, the surveyor. Upon Mr. Bird signing the contract, the defendant became the surety for its due fulfilment. The work was finished in February, 1840, and in 1844 it was discovered that the arch had opened in many places, and that the side walls bulged considerably. Mr. Bird was required to reconstruct the work at his own expense, but refused to do so; he afterwards offered to do it at cost price, subject to a reference as to his liability. This offer was declined, and on a report being made by Mr. Tite and Mr. Rennie that the works were defective, this action was commenced.

The Solicitor-general, for the defence, said that whatever defect had occurred had been occasioned wholly and solely by the gross mismanagement of the commissioners or their officers, who, having expended a large amount of public money, were ashamed of what they had done, and now sought to shift the blame on to the shoulders of Mr. Bird, the contractor. They had chosen to have this sewer built with a segmental arch, which was well known to be the very worst kind of arch known; it was to be done with the utmost expedition, between September and February. The rain poured so that all operations were more than once necessarily suspended for days together, and the earth was new and loose. After the sewer was finished, vaults were dug on each side to within a few feet of the side walls, and the earth all thrown on to the crown of the arch before the work was in any degree settled. Private drains were also made, cutting through the side walls, and so tending to weaken them. The whole of the work was executed under the inspection of surveyors, who certified the bills, and to the satisfaction of the commissioners, for they went and examined it when finished, having it illuminated for the purpose. Since the completion of this work no other had been built with a similar arch, and yet six years afterwards the commissioners asked Mr. Bird to pay the great and unnecessary expense incurred by them in repairing this sewer so injured, namely a special clerk of the works, in addition to the surveyors and the first architect in England to superintend. He confidently submitted that the contract had been properly carried out and that the defendant was entitled to the verdict.

The jury retired for some time, and then returned into court, but were not agreed in their verdict, and wanted to know if they could say that the work was done to the satisfaction of the commissioners then acting.

They were told that the learned Judge had left, and that they must find the issue for the plaintiffs or the defendant.

A long discussion then took place between the jury, and they retired again.

The jury, at last, came in, and said, "We find a verdict for the plaintiffs, but we are unanimously of opinion that the work was done to the satisfaction of the commissioners then acting."

Damages, 231*l.* 10*s.* 4*d.*

DONALDSON *v.* SMITH.

Tried before Lord Denman.

This was a case similar to the above, and the evidence produced was nearly the same.

The jury retired for three hours, and then found a verdict for the *Defendant*, or directly the reverse of that given the day before.

FLOATING CHURCH.

BETWEEN twelve and one o'clock on Wednesday, the floating Free church, built by Messrs. John Reid & Co., in their yard at the Glen, Port-Glasgow, was launched into the river. The vessel is built of iron, perfectly flat underneath, the one end formed after the fashion of a bow, and the other, or stern part, quite square. The extreme length is 78 feet, breadth 23, and depth of iron 4½ feet. From the one extremity of the vessel to the 'wooden wall,' or back end of the church, there is a space allowed to the extent of 6 feet, and from the other end to the front of the house 4½ feet. The middle-door entrance leads down to the area of the church, which has a fine, roomy, and most comfortable appearance. Far in the centre, at the other end, are the pulpit and precentor's desk, both neat and plain, corresponding with the rest of the interior. The height from the floor, which is level with the base of the boat, to the top of the church is 17 feet; and in the middle of the roof there are three cupola windows which light the whole house, and these have their centre-pieces moveable, to act as ventilators. On each side of the middle door is the entrance to the galleries, which are supported by eight chaste strong-looking pillars, and an equal number sustain the roof of the building. There are as yet no seats formed in either area or galleries, and it is doubtful if any will be placed till the church arrives at its destination. The joiners were busy bringing their work to completion, the painters having to come after. The pulpit is to be covered with velvet, and the whole is expected to be finished within eight or ten days. We should add, that immediately behind the pulpit there is space reserved sufficient to form a vestry; it is twenty feet by eight, and it is laid off to answer that purpose. The destination of this floating church is not, we understand, yet definitely fixed; and though it be a pity that such a structure should be required, it promises to serve well its object and design. It is intended to accommodate about 700 persons.—*Edinburgh Register.*

LARGE PLATE OF GLASS.—A glazier at Rotherham has a sheet of rough cast plate-glass 8 feet 9 inches long, by 7 feet 3 inches wide, intended for the roof of a greenhouse.

Correspondence.

PAROCHIAL CEMETERIES.

SIR,—I will crave your insertion, this week, of a brief calculation, omitted in my first communication, which may interest, as inviting correction or amendment. I have purposely stated each item very high, except the second, which is the most optional.

Purchase of thirty acres, near London, or any large place, at 200*l.*	£6,000
Erecting chapels, with spacious vaults	6,000
Walling, and internal fences	5,000
Laying out and ornamenting ground..	1,000
	£18,000

Neither the writer, nor perhaps any one living, can predict how long this would procure decent sepulture, without premature disturbance—*i.e.* much under twenty years. But supposing it were *three centuries*, surely, omitting nobler feelings, it would be "cheap," and "money well laid out."

As to every, or any, plan,—"*detur digniori*;" and a suggestion will be *good* if it cause a *better*.

I am happy to be able now to add, under his own hand, to those who approved the article in page 261, *Mr. Mackinnon, M.P.*, proposer of more than one measure of improvement on these subjects in Parliament.

I am, Sir, &c., J. D. PARRY.

London, June, 1846.

COLLEGE OF CHEMISTRY.

SIR,—Permit me to correct a trifling error in a late number of your journal, about the foundation-stone of the "Royal College of Chemistry." There were no *coins* deposited, when his Royal Highness honoured the members of the Institution by his presence to lay the foundation-stone; and let me add, that the Earl of Clarendon did not so much refer to the inferiority of English chemists, as to the want of an institution in England where analytical chemistry might be publicly taught, without the necessity of seeking one abroad. The noble Earl's opening address at the Conversazione held not long since, did ample justice to our great English chemists; and it is to be hoped, that the public will liberally patronize an establishment, productive of such valuable and enduring benefits as a scientific knowledge of chemistry is capable of bestowing on the different classes of the community.

I am, Sir, &c., VERAX.

*** We observed a jar in the hands of the Prince, and concluded it contained coins. As to the speech of Lord Clarendon, we will not pretend to say what his lordship *intended* to state, but are satisfied that the impression conveyed by what he did say, was precisely that which we expressed and objected to.

Miscellanea.

ARTESIAN WELLS.—The Artesian well commenced on the Southampton Common in 1838, with the intention of obtaining from it a bountiful supply of water for the town, and which has been carried to the depth of upwards of 1,300 feet, at an expense to the town of 12,886*l.*, and to the contractors of 11,163*l.* above that sum, was yesterday transferred to the Commissioners of Waterworks in its unfinished state, the contractors having refused to go on with the work, unless guaranteed their expenses and fair profits by the commissioners. The work was commenced in 1838. The first 78 feet of soil was found to be alluvium, the succeeding 304 feet London clay, the following 97 feet plastic clay, and the succeeding chalk, in which the boring has been carried down the great depth of about 821 feet, being a total of near 1,300 feet, and giving no indication by which a judgment can be found as to the depth to which the chalk may yet extend; and experience has shewn that the chalk will not yield the water required, and that the great stream sought for must be obtained from under the chalk basin. The well, in its present state, will yield by pumping from 7,500 to 10,000 cubic feet of water per day, but that is but a fourth of the quantity it is calculated will be required for the rapidly increasing demands of the town.—*Hants Advertiser.*

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